1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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it be perhaps, to help gather and to help carry home the corn. All the sewing is done by the men, even of the little shirts or jackets worn by the women. In carrying loads, the women rival the men in power and endurance. It is nothing uncommon to see a woman, with a big load on her back, and her year old baby seated on top, with his little legs dangling over the front edge of the load. The little monkeys ride securely there through the bush and dodge the overhanging vines and branches as expertly as could be done by an old horseman. When working for each other the people use their own machetes and axes, as a matter of course; but when hired by a foreigner, they invariably expect to be furnished with tools by their employer. 462 482 464

Domestic industry is at the very lowest ebb. Manufactures can hardly be said to exist. The only articles made, beyond furniture, arms &c., are hammocks, net bags, cotton cloth, and pottery. All of these are coarse and inferior in quality. None of the skill exhibited by the Guatemalan Indians exists here. The hammocks are made of a coarse twine, derived from the leaves of a species of *agave*, and are loosely woven in a frame with a needle. They are hardly long enough for an ordinary person to lie at length in them with comfort, and are used more for seats than for sleeping. They are swung between the posts of the house, near the door, and at a height of from a foot to a foot and a half from the floor. Everything is carried in net bags. They are made with a needle of bone and "meshed" like our fish nets. Some of them are very fine and they are of all sizes, from three inches to two feet deep. They are suspended by a string made of the same material, usually an inch wide and woven openly, in the same manner as the hammocks. The material of the finer and ordinary bags is the fibre of a species of aloe, or *agave*, much finer than that used for hammocks, and naturally nearly white. It is usually dyed of various colors to suit the fancy of the maker. The colors are obtained from several of the native plants and are very durable. A coarser kind is made of the same fibre as the hammocks. These are made with larger meshes, and are used to carry plantains, corn &c., from the field to the house. 28 32 286 [513] [386] [482]

The people of Tiribi procure all their bags from the Bri-bris, and I believe, their hammocks also. The Vallentes, living beyond the Tiribis, in the adjoining parts of the District of Chiriqui, make similar bags, but much finer and more elaborately wrought. The colors in the Bri-bri nets are always arranged in simple bands, while the patterns of the Vallente nets are often complicated and exhibit considerable taste. 438 531

Belts, breech-cloths, cloths for wrapping the bones of the dead, and women's petticoats are woven of cotton. The cotton is raised with no care beyond planting a few seeds and allowing the plants to take care of themselves. They grow to the height of ten or twelve feet, and almost every house has a few in its vicinity. The yellow flowers, buds, and open bolls are seen all the year round, together on every tree. The women collect the ripe cotton, pick it from the seeds with their fingers and spin &c. 286 [248] [283]

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

286 it. The loom is a simple frame of four sticks, the two upright ones are planted in the ground; the other two rudely tied to these. The warp is wrapped around the two horizontal bars and a simple contrivance of threads is arranged to open and reverse it. The thread for the woof wound on slender sticks is then passed through in the usual manner and driven tight by blows of a smooth stick. The process is exceedingly slow [462] and tedious and I have never seen it performed except by the men. The belts are usually two to three inches wide and four or five feet long. [291] Breech-cloths are about four feet long and a little more than a foot wide. The cloths for the dead and the women's petticoats are wider and a trifle longer. Except the cloths for the dead, which are woven white and afterwards painted, most of this cotton work is ornamented with colors. Be- [386] sides native vegetable dyes, the people of Bri-bri buy cotton dyed a dirty purple with the blood of the *murex*. This is procured from the people of [438] Terraba on the Pacific. They also now occasionally buy colored threads of foreign production, especially a rich bluish purple, of which they are particularly fond. All of this weaving is with very coarse thread, nearly as thick as the finer twines used by shopkeepers in the United States for tying small packages. The cloth is consequently coarse in texture and rough in appearance, but closely woven and soft to the feel. It makes excellent towels, though rather heavy for that purpose. The largest piece of work of this kind I ever saw, was a blanket large enough to cover a good sized double bed. It was in possession of an old woman who wanted to sell it to me for a cow, and refused ten dollars cash.

The pottery now made is the coarsest and poorest I have ever seen. 323 None of the finely made and elaborately ornamented vessels found in the 415 *huacas* or graves are made at present. The use, for half a century or more, of foreign cast-iron pots and kettles has restricted this industry, and possibly helped to injure the character of the work. But two or three vessels taken by me from Tiribi graves, certainly not less than fifty or sixty years old, are in no respect superior to those made at the present day. Native earthenware is now only used for receptacles for chicha. The jars are large—say from ten to twenty gallons capacity. The form is very simple, the workmanship is rough, the clay is coarse and badly mixed, the burning is almost always imperfect, and they are always without the slightest attempt at ornament. The jars are moulded by hand, the clay being added spirally, and moulded by the fingers and trimmed with a smooth stick, in exactly the same manner as I have seen done by the negro women in Santo Domingo. After a certain amount of drying, they are burnt in the open air, in a fire of sticks heaped over them. Each jar is burnt separately.

484 Although not given to unnecessary exertion, these people travel occasionally from house to house, and even make journeys to Terraba and Limon. The laziest will gladly walk for two days to a dance. They also occasionally go off into the less frequented regions to collect sarsaparilla, with which to buy whatever of foreign manufacture they may want, like

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

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LARGE CARRYING BAG
(Depth, 24 inches)

[facing p. 54]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

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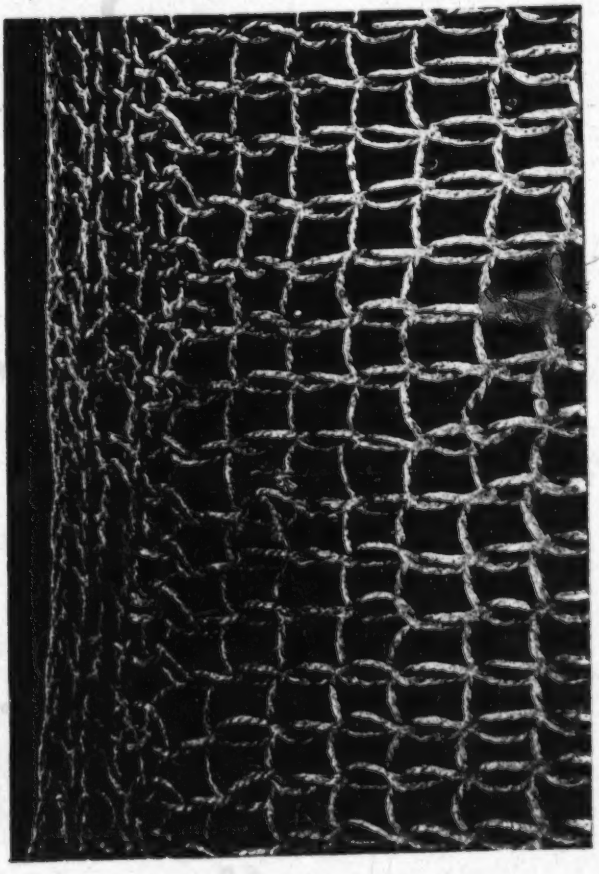

DETAIL OF BAG SHOWN IN PLATE V

SKINNER—BRIBRI

[facing p. 55]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

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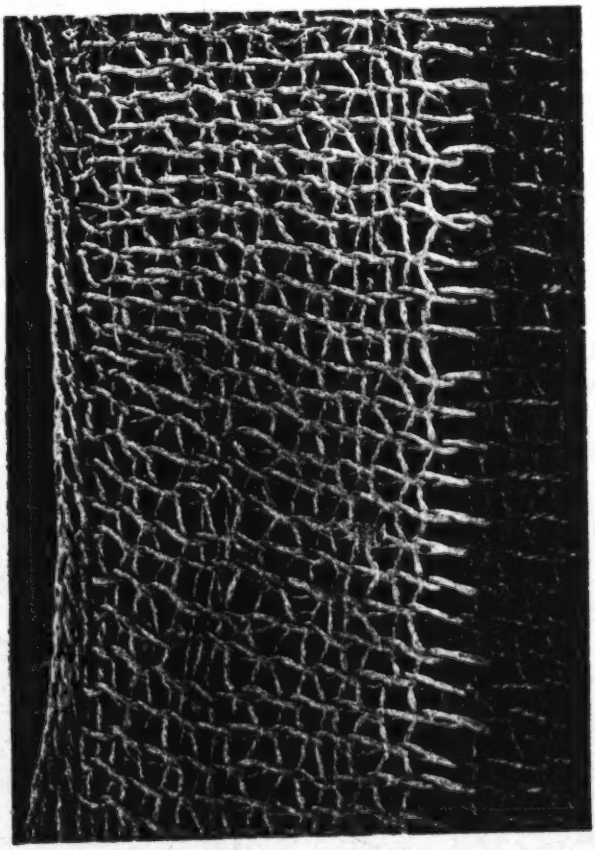
PL. VII



DETAIL OF A CARRYING BAG

SKINNER—BRIBRI

[facing p. 56]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

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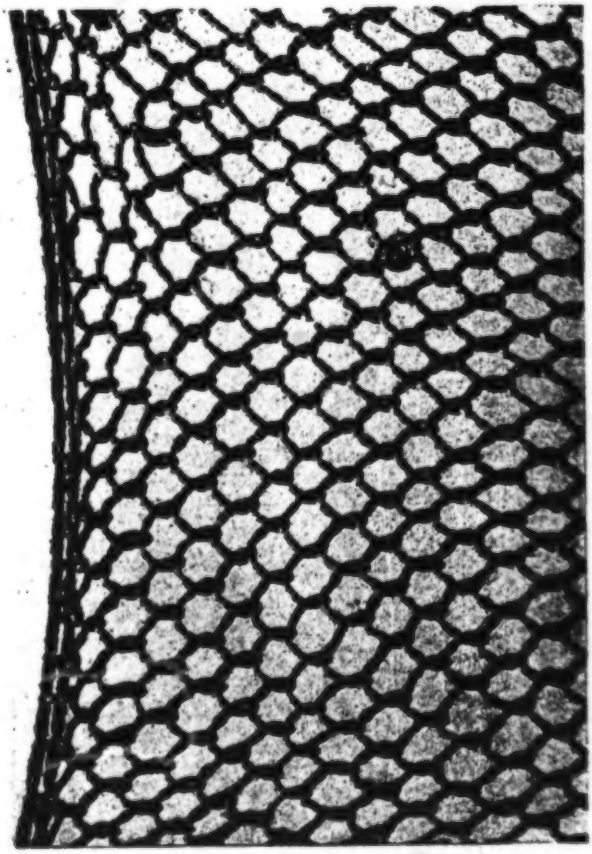
PL. VIII



DETAIL OF SINGLE-LOOP CARRYING BAG

SKINNER—BRIBRI

[facing p. 57]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

The seats vary in size from diminutive forms used by children to benches six to ten feet long, narrow, with square ends and clumsy feet. Some of the children's seats have been used as toys. Pl. IV, *a*, illustrating a seat shaped like a turtle, still has about the neck a portion of the fiber string by which its little owner dragged it about;

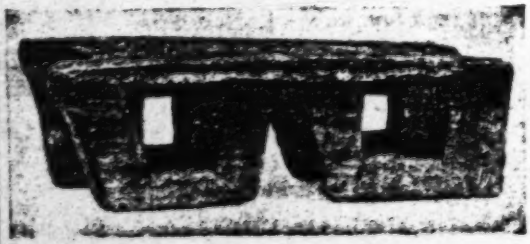

FIG 3.—Stool with unusual supports (length 13¼ in.).

and, to add to the realism of its play, the child had also fitted the ill-smelling carapace of a freshly killed tortoise of the family *Chelydra* over the top of this stool.

Hammocks and Beds.—Large, handsomely netted hammocks of string made from native fibers are often used for sleeping, each member of the family having his own. They are

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

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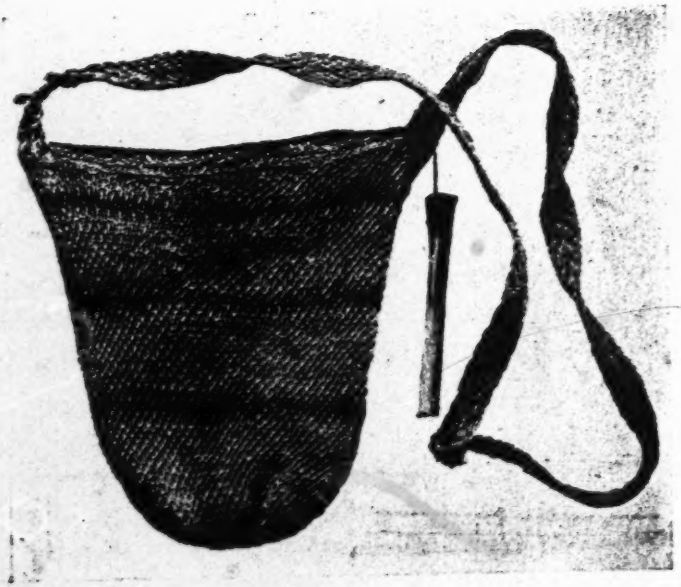

BAG WITH DOUBLE POCKET FOR CARRYING BLOWGUN PELLETS
(Depth of bag, 7¼ inches)

[Facing p. 58]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

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made usually in two sizes, only both of which are more capacious than ours. A large example in the collection of the Museum is made in coarse diagonal net, the strands passing over two and under two.

Especially in such houses as are provided with raised floors, one finds beds in addition to hammocks, the groundwork of which is usually a coarse, plain blanket made of a [287] heavy bark cloth, or tapa, about a yard square.

Bags.—In abundant evidence in every house are the carrying bags, in varying sizes, consisting of coiled work without foundation, and manufactured of cotton or sisal fiber. These bags are made with bone [412] needles, fashioned somewhat like the bone netting-needles of the Central Algonkians, and are, as Gabb says, "meshed like our fiber nets." The bags are sometimes double, one being netted within another, and are often ornamented with a few encircling, parallel bands in black or red, or both, colored with native bark dyes. The bags are [482] called *chákara*. All are furnished with a head- or breast-strap, woven of one piece with the bag.

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

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BAG FOR BLOWGUN PELLETS
(Depth, 6 inches)

[facing p. 59]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

with the bag. They are by no means so handsome as the bright-colored bags made by the Valiente Indians nearer the coast, and the Bribri complain that their manufacture will soon be a lost art, except among those dwelling in the remote forest fastnesses, whence the greater supply now comes. Nevertheless, at present the bags are plentiful, and abundant specimens of numerous weaves were secured, ranging in size from tiny pockets, intended to contain clay blowgun pellets, to large receptacles for transporting plantains.

286 ● 415

Pl. v represents a large carrying bag, the ground color of which is white, traversed by two transverse horizontal bands in brown. It is of the same technique as the specimen shown in Mason's work,[10] which the author describes as "a coiled carrying bag from Chiriqui, Colombia, and is a type of an enormous amount of ware to be found in Middle America . . . . and is called in this monograph coiled work without foundation . . . . the twine constituting the fabric interlocks with the stitch underneath and makes a complete revolu-

286 [171]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

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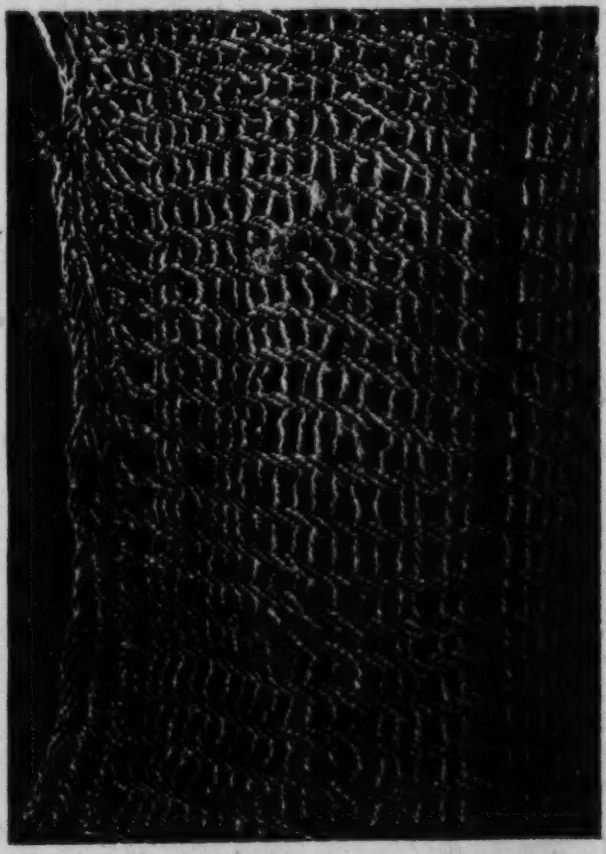
PL. XI



SKINNER—BRIBRI

DETAIL OF WOVEN CARRYING BAG WITH RIBBED APPEARANCE

[facing p. 60]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

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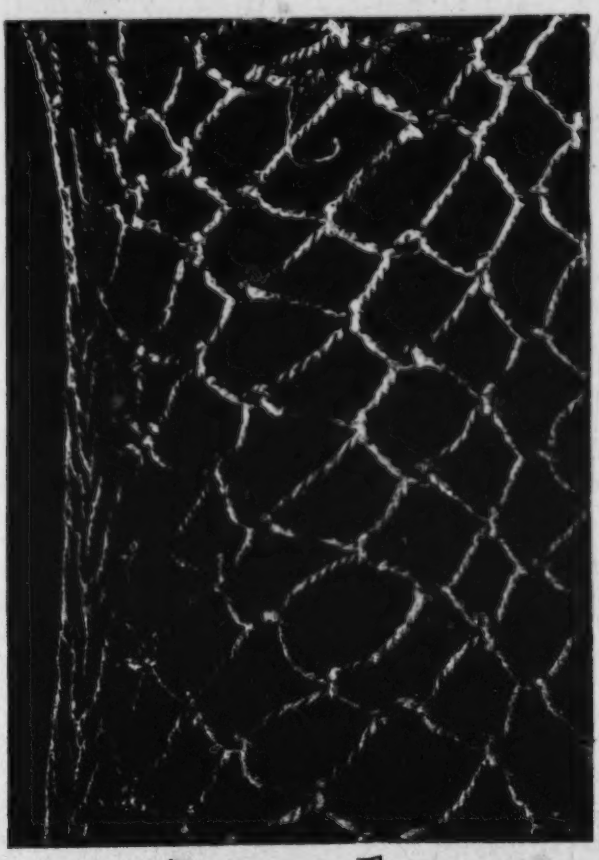
tion, catching the next stitch, and so on. Without definite information on the subject, it is believed that in making these bags some sort of a gauge is used by the weaver—a small stick which may be slipped along as the work proceeds."

The edge of the bag mentioned above is shown in detail in pl. VI and is made similarly to the rest of the receptacle, except that, instead of looping into the coil directly above it, each loop passes over two loops to the right, then returns, passing two more to the left before interlocking with it. The border is composed of a double row of such netting. The carrying strap is made of a 22-strand braid, netted diagonally.

Pl. VII represents the detail of a large carrying bag, white in ground color, with three bands of decoration, each being a double bar, brown above and gray beneath. The process resembles that of the preceding (pl. VI), except that each loop, instead of passing through one loop, goes through two, and crosses itself on two more loops in the row below. The next rows above and below alternate the grouping of the pairs of loops.

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

28% PL. XII



SKINNER—BRIBRI

DETAIL OF A BAG OF LOOP-WORK ALTERNATING WITH KNOTTED NET

[facing p. 61]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

The edge is similar to that shown in pl. VI, except that it is a single row. The strap for carrying is only an 18-strand net. 286

Pl. VIII shows the detail of a small bag, woven like the last, except that each loop connects singly with its neighbor, and does not take in groups of two, as in pl. VII.

Pl. IX represents a small, double-pocket bag woven like that shown in pl. VI. The bag is intended for carrying clay blowgun pellets, with a division reserved for small game. A bone pellet gauge is attached to the edge. The edge differs from the others in that it is made up of two strands, and the strap for carrying is 20-ply. 286 415

Pl. X shows a small, elongate receptacle, designed for carrying blowgun pellets. The carrying strap is made similarly to all the others, but is of two-strand net. The bag is of coil without foundation work.

The bag of which a detail is illustrated in pl. XI is based on the coil without foundation process, except that, instead of alternating the pairs of loops, they are directly opposite throughout. The cord of which the 286

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

286 bag is made is tighter and more closely twisted, giving the netting a ribbed appearance.

Pl. XII exhibits the detail of a large bag of simple loop-work alternating with knotted net, the looping occurring only near the top and bottom.

237 282 224 415 Another form of small bag is made from the scrotum of a buck, stuffed with ashes while still fresh, and dried. Bags of this nature were seen worn about the necks of small children, and were probably filled with hunting charms. They could not be purchased, as they were regarded as possessing magic properties.

285 415 *Baskets.*—Bags and baskets of open weave and of sizes ranging from that of a cup to those as big as a washtub, were seen. The latter are used chiefly for carrying burdens or for storage. Besides these baskets and bags, carrying-straps of bark were [482] used, and with these passed over the forehead, as among the forest Indians of northern America, heavy burdens could be transported for long distances. Pl. XIII [854] illustrates the use of a carrying basket and

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

[facing p. 75]

WOVEN FABRICS
(*a*, Belt; *b*, Blanket; *c* Headband)

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

Weaving.—Two women's blanket skirts of woven cotton were obtained after considerable search, one of which is shown in pl. XVIII, *b*. As the manufacture of cotton cloth is now said to be a lost art, we must turn again to Gabb[14] for his observations.

"Belts, breech-cloths, cloths for wrapping the bones of the dead, and women's petticoats are woven of cotton. The cotton is raised with no care beyond planting a few seeds and allowing the plants to take care of themselves. They grow to the height of ten or twelve feet and almost every house has a few in its vicinity. The yellow flowers, buds, and open bolls are seen all the year round, together on every tree. The women collect the ripe cotton, pick it from the seeds with their fingers and spin it. The loom is a simple frame of four sticks; the two upright ones are planted in the ground; the other two rudely tied to these. The warp is wrapped around the two horizontal bars and a simple contrivance of threads is arranged to open and reverse it. The thread for the woof wound on slender sticks is then passed through in the usual manner and driven tight by blows of a smooth stick. The process is exceedingly slow and tedious and I have never seen it performed except by the men. The belts are usually two or three inches wide and four or five feet long. Breech-cloths are about four feet long and a little more than a foot wide. The cloths for the dead and the women's petticoats are wider and

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

a trifle longer. Except for the cloths for the dead, which are woven white and afterwards painted, most of this cotton work is ornamented with colors. Besides native vegetable dyes, the people of Bri-bri buy cotton dyed a dirty purple with the blood of the *murex*. This is procured from the people of Terraba on the Pacific. They also now occasionally buy colored threads of foreign production, especially a rich bluish purple, of which they are particularly fond. All of this weaving is with very coarse thread, nearly as thick as the finer twines used by shopkeepers in the United States for tying small packages. The cloth is consequently coarse in texture and rough in appearance, but closely woven and soft to the feel."

286 [292] [386] [439]

Gabb also speaks of a very large blanket of this material, large enough, he says, to cover a good-sized double bed. A plain blanket of this description was seen by the writer on Coen river.

Besides the blankets, a belt of woven cotton (pl. XVIII, *a*) ornamented with parallel bands of blue and red on the natural white ground, was obtained. It is an old specimen, perhaps the only one that remained among the Bribri. [531]

A head-band of closely woven cotton thread (pl. XVIII, *c*) was purchased of

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

286 Ramón, "the king." This is a narrow strip, less than an inch broad and 28½ inches in length; in color it is red, with a blue central band and white stitches on the border. It is a fine piece of native work.

283 Pl. XIX, *d*, illustrates a wooden spindle for cotton thread. A spindle whorl of tortoise-shell from another spindle was also obtained.

301 237 789 778 *Necklaces.*—The Bribri women no longer wear the heavy bead necklaces described by Gabb, although the men still delight in similar ornaments, but made of jaguar teeth. These are especially difficult to obtain, since the Indians seem to have the idea that the possession of one of these ornaments endows the owner with some of the powers of the animal from whose teeth they are made.

301 Pl. XX, *d*, represents one of these ornaments, made of exceptionally large teeth strung on a fiber cord, alternating with small, red-glass trade beads. Fig. *c* of the same plate shows a smaller but more primitive necklace, in which the alternating beads are made of some species of snail-shell,

medium-sized *haba*, the strips are usually around 30 inches long, while the largest are around 50 inches. The base of the *haba* is triangular with the corners and two sides rounded. The third side is kept flat to fit more steadily on a person's back. In making the basket, the strips are placed on the ground and the foot put over as many ends as possible to hold the pieces in place. The opposite ends are left free, and the weaving is done with the fingers (see fig. 9, *a*). The pattern resulting from this is a hexagon (see fig. 7, *b–1*). When the base is completed the strips are doubled upward and interwoven, particularly at the corners, and horizontal strips are added as strengthening bands at the start and finish of every hexagon, the pattern remaining the same as that of the base. At the very top, a horizontal band is overlapped by the main strips and woven into the rim. A wide ribbon of the vine is fastened around the *haba* when used for carrying. This band is suspended from the forehead of a person, and the basket hangs flat on his back (see fig. 8, *a*).

Baskets are also made from the *bejuco negro*, or, preferably, from the vine called *anda-riel* (see p. 11). These baskets are circular with a decided bulge or projection a little above the base. They vary in size from short baskets with handles to very tall ones (see fig. 7, *c*). The strips used for the baskets are cut narrower than those for the *haba*, and may be added to in order to increase the depth of the article. As with the *haba*, the strips are put on the ground at the start. They are crossed, however, in the center, and another strip is then tied to this center portion or base, and is woven in and out of the projecting strips by hand. Adding of strips to make the basket larger is accomplished by weaving a strip well into the basket until an end appears on the other side of the base.

Weaving. The *Boruca* are today the only Indians of Costa Rica who do any weaving, in spite of the fact that they do very little. In 1945, there were only six women in the village of Boruca who wove skirts, *mantas*, and one woman who wove only men's belts. Almost all the women and many of the girls, however, knew how to make thread. A common practice was to make thread and give it to one of

[1] Barrett, 1915, pt. II, pp. 252, 258.

286 the weaving women to use, and then pay her
[437] a small sum for her work if a skirt was desired.
283] Those who did not wear *mantas* still made the thread and sold it or exchanged it with the weavers for some other object. The primary cause for lack of enthusiasm in weaving appears to be the class of cotton available. The
248 *Boruca* plant a tree cotton (see p. 6) that yields a very small pod, and consequently, the Indians become discouraged at the produce. The famous "colored cotton," which is so called as it is light brown, is also planted. This is the cotton which called the Spaniard's attention so markedly in El Salvador during the
[171] Conquest, and which is used today by the *Cayapa* Indians of Ecuador.[25] This colored cotton does not have to be dyed. It is, however, more delicate to make into thread than
283 the white cotton, as it breaks oftener. The best spindles, as the best looms, and weaving
[236] instruments of the *Boruca* are made of pejibaye palm, although *chonta*, both *mana-kra'* and more seldom *kanazira* (see pp. 12–13), are considered good (see fig. 9, *b*). The whorl, is commonly of bone, but pejibaye, *chonta*, and occasionally pottery whorls are seen. Some of the whorls are undecorated, but some have incised horizontal grooves (fig. 9, *b–3, 4*).

To make thread, the cotton is removed from
[248] the burr and carefully deseeded by hand, the seeds being saved for planting. The cotton is then put on a hide, and the women take two sticks, one in each hand, and beat the cotton making it as smooth as possible, after which, it is pulled into wide strips and rolled into balls. When the cotton is ready, the woman sits on a low bench and puts the spindle in a gourd on the ground. She holds the spindle in her right hand and the thread in her left, between the thumb and index finger, working so fast that it seems as if the spindle is rarely in her hand at all. This process the Indians call "dancing," as the spindle literally dances in the gourd (see fig. 5, *c*).

386 Once the thread is made, it is either left its natural color or dyed. The *Boruca* still have a few colors which they dye themselves, but red, yellow, green, and bright blue are bought,
[439] generally not as dyes, but as already colored mercerized cotton thread, at the nearest *ladino* town. Due to the relatively high price of these

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Boruca

237 Indians, but also by the Spaniards who de-
386 manded purple thread, during the Conquest
[648] and the colonial period, as tribute for the church as well as for themselves.[28] For a more complete discussion of this purple dye in other parts of Central America, see MacCurdy.[29] Another, not so strong, purple dye is gathered from a small mollusk (*Purpura kiosquiformia* Duclos) which lives on the roots of the mangrove trees (*Rhizophora Mangle* L.). This creature must be killed to be of use. The soft part of the shell is removed, and the liquid it contains is put on a thin stick and *drawn* on the material in the same manner as using a colored pencil. When first applied, the liquid is black, but it turns purple on drying. This is employed very seldom today, as the little weaving that is done has generally woven designs, and is not painted.

● 286 The actual weaving is done by the women
[462] seated on the low bench that is characteristic of the *Boruca* (see p. 13). The loom used is horizontal with a warp beam and a back strap, the other end of the loom being fastened to the wall of the house or to a tree (see fig. 9, *d*). The crossing of the weft is accomplished with a straight wooden rod, after which the woof is pressed into position with a wooden sword slightly longer than the width of the cloth. A shed stick is used, but there is no heddle rod. The width of the web is kept even by the temple, which is a piece of cane, preferably the part near the inflorescence, with a bone point at each end (see p. 18).

The cloth woven by these people is usually
[531] heavy with a stripe design (see fig. 7, *d*). Some women, however, weave a conventionalized geometric pattern horizontally across the white space between the stripes (see fig. 9, *a*), not permitting the design to appear on the reverse side of the cloth. This is a single-faced
[171] weft-pattern weave, and is a technique unknown elsewhere in Central America. It has been found in ancient graves on the Ecuadorian coast, by the island of Puna.[30] Men's belts are also striped, although the thread used and the weaving is finer than that of the skirts.

burn, 1779, p. 112.

[29] See MacCurdy, 1911, pp. 160–61.

[115] [30] Information given to the writer by Professor Carlos Zeballos M., Director of the Municipal Museum, Guayaquil, Ecuador.

286 [462] **Bags.** Bags (fig. 8, *b–3*) are woven only by the men. They are made by cutting strips of *majagua*, *pita*, or whatever material is used, very, very thin. This is then twisted into a fine cord. The bag is started from a circle of this cord. The end is passed through this, and a knot is made, leaving a loop. Once the circle has been started, the whole is put on the ground, and the maker puts his heel on top of the center. Two knots are made, one on each side of a loop, each time the cord is passed through a loop. When the work is large enough to be managed more easily, it is taken off the ground and held between the knees. Some bags are made with only one knot at each intersection. Bags are used for carrying [415] the gourd water bottle, for keeping materials, and for carrying or keeping odds and ends.

Hammocks. The *Boruca* men make a hammock, from *majagua* (see fig. 8, *b–6*). The weave is coarser than the hammocks made by the *Bribri* from the same material. In hammock-making, the strips are twisted tightly and fastened around a stick which is placed horizontally at each end. The weaving is done with the fingers. Each time the strip is woven in and out of the spaces left by the original strips and then looped over the sticks at the end. When the hammock is finished, a turkey or chicken thigh bone is usually substituted for the sticks, and acts as a link between the hammock and the rope which ties the hammock to the wall.

285 295 **Hats.** One or two Indian men occasionally make straw hats from the leaf of the *sem-krá'* (see p. 7). The leaf is first dried in the sun, then cut into thin strips, and the hat is woven basket-fashion, commencing from the center of the crown. This whole technique is not common to the *Boruca* and is probably borrowed from the Chiriquíanos who are found scattered through much of southeastern Costa [439] Rica. The hats are made to sell in *ladino* towns, and are seldom used by the *Boruca*.

287 **Bark Cloth.** Today, the *Boruca* do not profess to use bark cloth or *mastate* (fig. 7, *c–4*) as part of their dress, nor do they use it any longer for sails (see p. 15). Occasionally, bark cloth is used as a blanket for sleeping. The *Boruca* claim to have worn *mastate* as late as 1933, when they had easy access to the coast

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949

SA19 Talamanca SA19
Boruca

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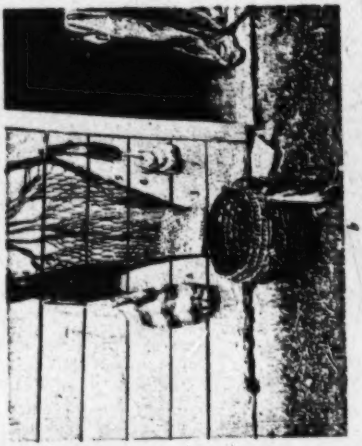

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a, Girls bales with oranges in bales in front of school house. b, Cordage artifacts used by the Boruca: 1, bales; 2, 4, 7, string bags made by the Talamanca peoples; 3, bales; 5, string bag made by the Boruca; 6, hammock made by the Boruca. c, Malpaga ready for use. d, Sample of rope technique.

[p. 58]

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949

SA19 Talamanca SA19
Boruca

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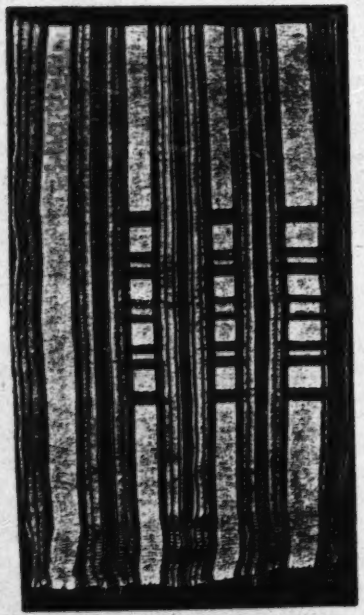

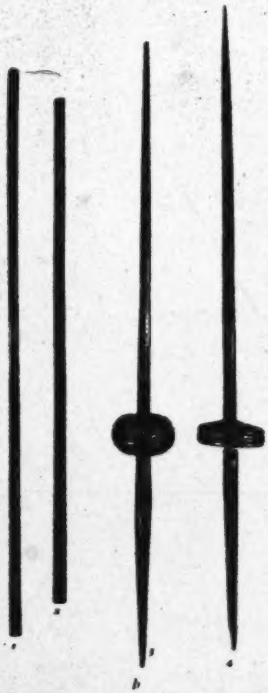

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a, Mano or skirt with single-faced weft-pattern weave (courtesy of Peabody Museum, Harvard University). b, Pejibaille artifacts: 1, 2, pejibaille rods used in weaving; 3, 4, spindles and whorls of pejibaille (courtesy of Peabody Museum, Harvard University). c, Start of a huke. d, Woman weaving man's huke.

[p. 59]

[1] [Ought to read "pejibaye", see errata, p. 51. —Analyst]

5:Urcullu M-5 (1763) 1913
SA19 Talamanca SA19

101 There are seven tribes of those heathens who are known as
131 *Talamancas;* the first is that of the same name, which embraces two others called *Cabécara* and *Biceyta;* the second is called *Térraba;* the third, *Thérar,* on account of living upon an island of that name on the coast of the North Sea;[11] the fourth is named *Changuen;* the fifth is called *Zegua;* the sixth, *Thorasque,* and the seventh, *Guaymi.* Of these the last three are in the districts of the Kingdom of *Tierra Firme,* and the first four in this district of *Guatemala.*[12]

721 The Indians of all these tribes are generally brave and warlike;
[411] for their most common exercise is to go about with bows and spears practicing for their wars, which they are generally engaged in with each other for the purpose of enslaving the men and carrying off the women. The sport and diversion of the boys is
[868] to shoot arrows and throw spears and they thus become very
[857] skilfull in the handling of them.

All the men of these tribes go entirely naked, only the *Talamancas* covering their private parts with girdles. The women
291 all wear the girdle down to the knee, or use a blanket, which they
[286] weave from cotton or with *mastate* (a bark fibre) which they get by cutting trees.

The greatest sport of these barbarians is to paint themselves
304 black over the whole of their bodies, which they do with the
[302] greatest hardiness, allowing themselves to be scarified by the experts whom they have among them, and over the bleeding places they put *copal,*[13] which makes them swell up, and some even die by being cut in delicate parts, such as the face, neck and elsewhere. When they kill an enemy in war, they make a
304 hole with a peg of strong wood and they drill the cartilage of the
554 nose, as well as the lower lip; and when they have opened these two holes they put in each one of them a little bone like a cigar-

[11] The island of *Téjar* or Island of *Colón.*

[12] The enumeration which Padre Urcullu made was not strictly correct,
[114] inasmuch as the *Zeguas, Thorasques* or *Dorasques* and *Guaymies* lived wholly or in part, like the *Guaymies,* in the territory of *Costa Rica;* but it will be noted that besides, according to his statement, the Island of *Colón,* and consequently the *Bay of Almirante* belonged to *Costa Rica.* M. M. P.

[13] *Protium copal.*

291 a cheap cotton cloth which is bought from
[439] the nearest trading post or commissary and made into a Mother Hubbard. Short skirts and blouses are occasionally seen, particularly on the Pacific side. Some of the older Bribri women in upper Talamanca weave brown and white striped skirts from cotton (*see* Manufactures).[81] The art of weaving is said to have
• 286 been learned from the Borucas. The Bribri
177 do not know the single-weft technique, however.[82]

291 A man's clothing is generally a pair of trousers and a shirt. A belt can be a piece of vine, string, bark cloth, or brown and white striped cotton woven by the men. Except on
[184] the Pacific side, leather belts are almost never worn. Sandals are unknown, and shoes are rare in the region of Talamanca but are more common on the Pacific slope.

302 **Adornment.** Women's hair is long (figs. 9, *d*; 10, *b–c*) and usually parted in the center, braided, and rolled into a bun. Only at Salitre
[184] and Ujarrás does one see short and curled hair
[301] on the younger women. Flowers, ribbons, cheap barrettes and combs, often as many as six or seven, are favorite adornments for the head (fig. 9, *a–c*). Although men have short hair, there is a tendency to allow it to grow longer than is customary among non-Indians, particularly the forelocks which are combed straight back or hang on the face untouched (fig. 10, *a*, *d*).

Face painting seems to have been practised on the Caribbean side as late as the eighteen seventies. Gabb calls attention to it in Talamanca [83] and the then Bishop of Costa Rica, Bernardo A. Thiel, mentions some women and children whom he saw in Chirripó and states: "... They had two horizontal black bands

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 20(B)--ANALYST]

TRANSPORTATION

481 **By Land.** The most common method of transportation is by foot. The Talamancans are expert walkers on steep, rocky trails, some of which lead through tunnels of matted forest

[TEXT CONTINUES BOTTOM OF P. 20(B)--ANALYST]

[81] Compare this with Gabb, 1875, pp. 517–18.
[82] Stone, 1949, pp. 16–17.
[83] Gabb, 1875, p. 519.

283 824 sp.) is used on the Pacific slope for tumplines and rope.

287 [462] [824] **Bark Cloth.** Men generally make bark cloth as it requires considerable strength. There are three kinds of *mastate* or bark cloth made in Talamanca and two on the Pacific side. Red *mastate* (*Brosimum costaricensis* Liebmann) and white *mastate* (*Brosimum* sp.) are used on both slopes. The third kind is *Poulsenia armata* (Miq.) Standl; Moraceae. The method of preparation is similar.

The bark of the first two trees is cut and rolled at a right angle to the grain. The outer surface is removed by beating with a stick and then with a wooden club cut with horizontal grooves, one side of which is usually slightly curved. It is soaked in water, pulled to the shape and size desired, and left in the sun to dry. Stones are placed at the corners to hold the shape. The cloth is used for blankets, [513] hammocks (amongst the Cabécar only), to carry babies, as tumplines, belts, and loincloths, and as an article of trade with the [438] Borucas.

The third type, *testí* in Cabécar, is prepared by cutting around the tree with a machete the desired size for the cloth. Then a wedge-shaped wooden stick is used to peel it off the trunk. The piece is then doubled and the outer bark is cut in a thin sheet and rolled back, leaving the cambium or inner bark. This is soaked for several days and is afterwards beaten with a wooden stick to make it pliable and soft. It is used primarily for blankets.

[824] [415] In Talamanca and in Chirripó, the wild rubber tree (*Castilla* sp.) also furnishes a cloth for hunting pouches.

286 415 **Net Bags.** The Bribri have long been famous for the manufacture of net bags (*see* Trade), although the Cabécares are known to make them occasionally. They serve a variety of purposes besides being a depository for personal and household things. They are used for hunting and for carrying all manner of cargo, from plantains to babies. Most bags are made of *pita* or *cabuya* thread and have a long handle which also acts as a tumpline. The usual shape [224] is baglike, but those for blow-gun hunting are elongated and have small divisions or pockets. At times in Talamanca, casting nets are made [227] from the same material and in the same technique.

286 415 [184] nique. Very seldom does one see bags woven from cotton or *guariumo* fiber. This last is found among the Cabécares, particularly on the Pacific side.

286 There are two types of weaving, single or double loop.[89] Those for ordinary purposes are single looped and are generally made with the fingers alone, although at times a bone needle is used to open the hole. The fine meshes, however, are made with needles of [412] *pejibaye* thorns, and those a bit coarser with [824] needles of deer or monkey bones. The coarse [237] bags are always plain and undyed. The better [531] ones, however, are decorated with horizontal bands of red-brown, yellow, and black. (*see* Dyes).

285 824 [482] **Baskets.** *Havas* or carrying baskets are made by men from vines (*bejuco de hierro*) and are suspended down the back by a tumpline. Baskets for household use only are fashioned from the vein of the white *bijugua* leaf or from palm leaves or cane. Crudely made vine [231] basket-nets are used for setting hens and hung on the outer walls of the houses.

386 824 **Dyes.** Red dye for decorating net bags is obtained from the leaves of a vine (*Arrabidae chica* [H. & B.] Verl.)[90] and by rubbing the leaf of *Melastomaceae* sp. A darker red or purple-red comes from the leaf of the red *higuerilla* (*Ricinus communis* L.). On the Pacific side, yellow is made from the bulb of the *yuquilla* (*Curcuma longa* L.), whereas in the Talamanca region it is extracted from a vine called *skəbarko* in Bribri. Black is made by rubbing with *ojo de buey* (*Mucuna mutisiana* D.C.), and in Cabécar it is obtained from a leaf called *səkíbaL*. This must be mashed and rubbed dry on the fiber because if wet, it is ineffective.

352 **Hammocks.** Hammocks are made principally by Bribri men from *cabuya* thread although *pita* is also used (*see* Fibers), and occasionally by the Cabécares from bark cloth (*see* Bark Cloth). There are two sizes of Bribri hammocks. The largest one is generally used by the Bribri themselves and the smaller one,

[171]

[89] Skinner, 1920, pp. 58-62, gives a detailed description of these weaves.
[90] This is also used in the interior of South America.
[91] Gabb, 1875, pp. 511-12.

352 sufficient for an adult to sit in, is an important item of trade. They are found in Cabécar, Térraba, and Boruca households (*see* Trade).

286 [177] **Weaving.** The art of weaving was possibly borrowed by the Bribri from other cultures. It is practically non-existent today and does not appear to have been practised by the Cabécares in historical times. Gabb[91] gives a detailed account of the technique and mentions belts, burial cloths for bones, breechcloths, and "women's petticoats." Undoubtedly, skirts are meant and not underwear. Skinner cites headbands and blankets.[92] The only evidence of actual Bribri weaving known to the writer are belts, made by some men on the upper Lari and at Cabagra, and four skirts, made by women who claim to have been taught by the Borucas. The Bribri weave is distinguished by its coarseness. The decoration [531] of the skirts consists of wide brown and white stripes which suggest a relationship with that of the Borucas.

415 824 **Gourds.** Gourds are employed as water jars, containers, and cups for liquids of any kind; as receptacles, often with a *pita* handle for hanging on the wall; for carrying seeds when [252] planting; and as sieves, in particular for making *pejibaye* flour. Pieces of gourds are sometimes [264] used as spoons to dish out food and occa- [534] sionally to eat with. Rattles are also made.

[531] The gourds are generally plain, and when decorated, the designs are crude cuts or child-like drawings. The holes in the sieves are made [322] with a metal point attached to a wooden handle.

323 **Pottery.** Today, only in the region of the upper Lari is there any attempt at pottery making. Here the Bribri are said still to fashion the large clay chicha jars seen in the round houses (*see* Furnishings; fig. 4, *c*) by coiling. This process is described in detail by Skinner.[93] 273 Chicha is generally kept in leaf-lined *bavas* or in large wooden troughs.

501 824 **Canoes.** The Talamanca Bribri are the only people to make canoes. Cedar, *espavel* (*Ana-*

[91] Skinner, 1920, pp. 77–78. The writer has a large brown and white blanket made by the Bribri men about 1900.

[93] Skinner, 1920, pp. 67–68.